

**Howard County Ethics Commission
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043**

OPEN MEETING MINUTES

A duly advertised public meeting of the Howard County Ethics Commission was held in the Jessup Room/2nd Floor, George Howard Building, 3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, Maryland, 21043 on February 19, 2019, at 6:00 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Charles Fuller, Chair
Joanne Drielak
Joseph Markwordt
Jean Xu

Commission Members Absent: Jonathan Kromm

Staff Members Present: Kristen Bowen Perry, Senior Assistant County Solicitor, Attorney and Executive Secretary to the Commission

Fuller called the open meeting to order at approximately 6:05 p.m. The following items of business were discussed in open session:

1. Introduction – Executive Secretary. Ms. Perry introduced herself. She was appointed by the County Solicitor to serve as the Executive Secretary to the Commission effective January 1, 2019.
2. Vote to Approve Agenda: Motion was made by Drielak and seconded by Markwordt. There was a unanimous vote to approve the Agenda.
3. Updates regarding Financial Disclosures and Lobbyist Forms: The cycle for 2018 disclosures have started. Counsel is coordinating with IT to update the electronic system and make all necessary changes. Lobbyist reports for last year have been received.

Motion by Fuller to adjourn open meeting and go into closed meeting, which was seconded by Drielak and passed unanimously. Open Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:15 p.m.

Closed Meeting: Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, minutes of this open session are required to include the following:

Date of Closed Meeting: February 19, 2019

Time of Closed Meeting: Approximately 6:15 p.m.

Place of Closed Meeting: George/Howard Building, Jessup Room/2nd Floor, 3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

Purpose: To discuss, deliberate, and seek legal advice, on two confidential inquiries: Inquiry, 2019-01 and Inquiry, 2019-2.

Authority to Close: 1) Md. Code Ann., Gen. Prov. Art. §3-305(b)(7): To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter; attorney-client privilege; 2) Md. Code Ann., Gen. Prov. Art. §3-305(b)(13): To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter; 3) To comply with the Commission's Rules of Procedure set forth in Rule 03.C, "the Commission may be in closed sessions to consider an advisory opinion request to the extent that consideration of the request would necessarily lead to identification of the subject of the request;" 4) Howard County Code §22.203(m)(3): "The Commission shall publish or otherwise make available to the public copies of the advisory opinions, with the identities of the subjects deleted;" and 5) §22.203(n)(9) (i) After a complaint is filed and until a final finding of a violation by the Commission, all actions regarding a complaint are confidential."

Listing of topics discussed:


Inquiry 2019-01: The Commission reviewed, deliberated, and sought legal advice regarding the applicability and interpretation of the Code as it applied to Inquiry 2019-01, along with prior decisions from the Commission.

Inquiry 2019-02: The Commission reviewed, deliberated, and sought legal advice regarding the applicability and interpretation of the Code as it applied to Inquiry 2019-01, along with prior decisions from the Commission.

Persons present: Attorney Perry; Members: Drielak, Fuller, Markwordt, and Xu.

Actions taken: Deliberated, consulted with counsel, reviewed Howard County Code and prior decisions from the Commission, and issued verbal authorization and directives to the Commission's attorney to notify the complainants with the results. Specifically, that Inquiry 2019-01 and Inquiry 2019-02 have been dismissed. Counsel is instructed to include a brief explanation in the notification to the complainants.

Upon motion by Markwordt, and seconded by Drielak, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the closed meeting and re-open the open meeting. The open meeting was then called to order by Fuller and re-opened for a short discussion about the next meeting, wherein members agreed that the next meeting will be scheduled as needed. Upon motion by Markwordt and seconded by Xu, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the open meeting at approximately 7:04 p.m.



Kristen Bowen Perry
Executive Secretary
Approved: 3/15/19